

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, December 15, 2014, at 10:00am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Tom Smith, Vice-Chair Karen Leys, Commissioner Larry Davis, Commissioner Mark Evans, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, County Attorney Donna Shumate, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

Chair Smith called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and offered the Invocation.

Chair Smith stated that Jim Brown needs to be removed from the agenda.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this December 15, 2014, meeting. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA
Monday, December 15, 2014
10:00 AM

- 10:00 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation
Motion on Agenda for December 15, 2014, Meeting
Motion on Minutes for December 1, 2014, Meeting
- 10:05 A. Rita Miller, Tax Administrator
1. November Releases and Refunds - Standard release and refund of both automobile and real property taxes due to reasons listed on the report. Actions Requested – Vote on releases and refunds.
2. November Collections Report - Monthly 2014 collection rates through November as compared to 2013 monthly collection rates. No action requested.
3. Enforced Collections Report – Summarizes enforced collections for the month of November 2014. No action requested
4. Payment Agreement Report - List of people with payment agreements who did not make payments. No action requested.
5. Review of 2015 Revaluation Schedule – Information to be presented informing everyone of the 2015 Revaluation Schedule. No action requested.
6. Review of 2015 Listing Period – Information about the 2015 Listing Period. No action requested.
- 10:20 B. Laurie Lee – NC ABC Commission
RE: ABC Permitting Process. No action requested.
- 10:40 C. Phil Trew/Darren Rhodes – High Country Council of Governments/NC Commerce
RE: Alleghany County Economic Development Plan. No action requested.
- 11:05 D. Jim Brown – Recreation Director (deleted)
RE: Recreation Department’s Annual Report. No action requested.
- 11:20 E. Daniel Roten – Emergency Management Coordinator
RE: Alleghany County Workplace Safety Program. No action requested.
- 11:35 F. April Hamm – Transportation Director
RE: Section 5310 (ED Van) Grant – Updated discussions about the grant funding changes for the ED program and consideration for the capital funding match for the grant. Action Requested – Vote on the request.
- 11:50 G. General Business
1. 2015 Joint Meeting Schedule
Joint Meeting Schedule for the County Commissioners and Sparta Town Council to hold meetings in 2015.
Action Requested – Vote on the 2015 Meeting Schedule.
2. Propane Bid Award
Propane bids are due on Thursday, December 11 at Noon. More information will be presented at the meeting. Action Requested – Vote to award the bid.

3. NCACC Legislative Goals Conference Voting Delegate
The Conference is on January 15-16, 2015, in Moore County. A Commissioner needs to be selected as Alleghany County's Voting Delegate for the Conference. Action Requested – Vote on a voting delegate.
4. Veterans Memorial Park Update
5. Wellness Drawing
Drawing for employees who have obtained 90 points by November 30.
Action Requested – Draw 20 employees' names for a chance to win a \$10 Subway meal card.
- H. Public Comments—30 minutes
- I. Commissioners Comments
- J. Closed Session – NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) – legal
- K. Adjourn

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 1, 2014, meeting. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller, Tax Administrator, explained the NC Debt Set-Off Program, and how it works. She read information about the new tag/tax program and explained they are still working with the old collection system, too. She talked about the software vendor is through High Country Council of Government, and she isn't sure how long our current vendor will support the old system.

Rita Miller presented the November auto releases.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the November auto releases. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the November auto refunds under the vehicle tax system (VTS).

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the VTS November auto refunds. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the November real property releases.

Commissioner Evans and Rita Miller talked about there is no way to legally enforce collections on the deed-certification-error release.

Commissioner Irwin and Rita Miller talked about the list of releases/refunds are public records and available if anyone wants them.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the November real property releases. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the November real property refunds.

Commissioner Irwin made a motion to approve the November real property refunds. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the November 2014 reports; collections' report, enforced collection report.

Chair Smith and Rita Miller talked about anyone can enter into a payment agreement.

Commissioner Leys and Rita Miller talked about the payment agreement is the largest category on the enforced collection report. Commissioner Leys stated her appreciation.

Rita Miller presented the payment agreement report.

Commissioner Evans and Rita Miller talked about the enforced collection report's timeframe is for taxes 2007 and forward.

Rita Miller provided a revaluation timeline including the notices are going out on January 7. She explained that the listing forms are going in the mail the first of January.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the initial appeals/concerns are handled by the revaluation company then after that is the Board of Equalization and Review. He urged everyone to submit the appeal form back if there are questions so the revaluation company can go over the information.

Commissioner Irwin and Rita Miller talked about there is 30 days to request an appeal.

Commissioner Leys and Rita Miller talked about the costs of the software for maintaining the vehicle software is the annual maintenance fee and currently it doesn't cost any more.

Laurie Lee presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding ABC laws after the referendum occurs.

County Manager Don Adams asked if there is anything this Governing Body has to do in order for businesses to get their alcohol license. Laurie Lee answered no, there isn't.

Laurie Lee continued to present her PowerPoint presentation explaining options available if the Board wants to move forward.

Chair Smith talked about having the distribution formula written into the merger agreement between the County and the Town.

Commissioner Evans asked what the current agreement is.

County Manager Don Adams explained the current agreement is split 50/50 between the County and Town. He further explained that restaurants that want to sell alcohol has to purchase the alcohol at the local ABC store. He talked about the referendums and requirements for the wording on the ballot. He further talked about a package store cannot be established unless people go through the process that Laurie Lee just explained and meets the requirements. He talked about the current agreement and his recommendation, if the Commissioners want to proceed, is to create a study group.

Chair Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about the County Manager has not been approached about having a County ABC store.

Commissioner Irwin asked has anyone applied for a license. Laurie Lee said that she doesn't know because she didn't look at it before she left.

Commissioner Leys and Laurie Lee talked about the costs.

Commissioner Irwin and County Manager Don Adams talked about the County charging for a license.

Commissioner Leys and Laurie Lee talked about the definition of the ABC Board.

Phil Trew with High Country Council of Governments and Darren Rhodes with NC Department of Commerce came before the Board to present the Alleghany County Economic Development Plan. Darren Rhodes explained how the Alleghany County Economic Development Plan was started. He read the vision statement that was created by the steering committee and many public participants. Phil Trew talked about the eight different areas; Workforce Development, Youth Retention, Infrastructure, Small Business Development, Business Recruitment, Healthcare, Tourism, Agriculture. He explained that each area has strategies, key parties, impact/costs, timeframe. He reviewed each of the strategies for all of the eight areas.

Chair Smith thanked everyone for their participation in this Plan and the possibility of revisiting some of these areas.

Commissioner Irwin talked about it is a very comprehensive report and well put together but it isn't any good unless it is put in place and acted upon. He further talked about the need to develop a market strategy to recruit outside businesses. He stated the need to get started on an industrial park site in order to recruit businesses.

Darren Rhodes talked about the group discussed not having a plan to market the county. He further talked about the work is just now beginning, if the Board approves this. He reviewed the implementation schedule/summary in the Plan.

Chair Smith talked about this is something for the Board to look at adopting soon. The County Manager said he plans to put it on the next agenda.

Commissioner Irwin talked about this works with the County and the Town. Town Manager Bryan Edwards explained the Sparta Town Council has discussed it and is planning to vote on it at the January meeting.

Commissioner Irwin and County Manager Don Adams talked about the approval timeline for the Plan. Commissioner Irwin said he would like to see it on the next agenda for consideration.

Commissioner Leys asked about the status of hiring a BDC director because the BDC is referred to a lot in this Plan. The County Manager explained they are working with a part-time person and the BDC board hasn't decided when to proceed about hiring a full-time director. He explained the BDC board will take this Plan and review it. He stated that the BDC board is in a planning stage itself.

Commissioner Leys thanked them for their work. She said she is excited and ready to start.

Commissioner Evans talked about new business start-ups is a way to retain our youth.

County Manager Don Adams said to follow-up these conversations, he is going to request a special-called meeting to only talk about economic development. He stated North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) 158-7.1 is the economic development authority. He said this is a good starting point for the Governing Body to understand the rules and laws that we operate under. He talked about the NCGS's authority and must be able to calculate a return on investment. He said that he would like an opportunity with the Board to review what the Commissioners can do/can't do which will help prioritize actions for the Commissioners.

Chair Smith asked the Commissioners about having a future meeting around mid-January. County Manager Don Adams talked about meetings scheduled in January at this time. Chair Smith talked about traditionally the holiday meeting is normally rescheduled on the next day. Chair Smith asked what the Board wants to do.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to move the January 19, 2015 to January 20, 2015, at 10:00am. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

The Board talked about when to have a special meeting. They discussed dates. The County Manager explained the purpose of the meeting. The Board decided on January 22, 2015, at 6:30pm. County Manager Don Adams explained that the Clerk will not be in attendance at this meeting due to her attending a clerks' conference.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to set a meeting on January 22, 2015, at 6:30pm. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Leys mentioned having part of this for coordinated private investors, too. Phil Trew talked about putting it under the Small Business section.

Chair Smith declared a brief recess at 11:49am.

Daniel Roten presented the Alleghany County Workplace Safety Program that he developed. He explained that the County already has several portions in place. He reviewed the Workforce Safety Program including Management's Commitment and Involvement, Safety Committee.

Commissioner Evans and Daniel Roten talked about who is the safety committee.

Daniel Roten continued to review the Program; Safety and Health Training, Safety Inspections, First-Aid Procedures/Instructions, Accident Investigation.

County Manager Don Adams explained that Alleghany County is penalized by the insurance company for every day after the initial 24-hour period following an accident that the report is not submitted.

Commissioner Leys and Daniel Roten talked about the insurance company provides a reduction on our premiums if these policies are put in place.

Daniel Roten continued to review the Program; Recordkeeping Procedures, Safety Rules/Policies/Procedures, Slips/Trips/Falls Prevention, Footwear Policy.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the Footwear Policy and people need to wear the appropriate footwear for the job the person is doing at that time.

Daniel Roten continued to review the Program; Motor-Vehicle Policy—Maintenance, Motor-Vehicle Policy—Driver Selection.

County Manager Don Adams talked about since we are so small everyone has access to a vehicle. He provided examples where it would impact the job if they are required to drive for their job. He explained that he and the County Attorney have been having conversations about current employees. He talked about the current procedures/process for new employees. He further talked about the process that AIM already uses through NCDMV and provided an example. He explained that all employees have to sign a paper to allow their driver's license to be checked. He talked about his conversations with the County Attorney about this. He told the Board that he is not asking for a vote on the Program today.

Commissioner Irwin and County Attorney Donna Shumate talked about convictions are public records.

Commissioner Leys, Daniel Roten and County Manager Don Adams talked about after entering everyone into the system after the initial part then it is continuous. Commissioner Leys explained her experience with the school system. April Hamm explained the system that AIM uses. Commissioner Leys and County Manager Don Adams talked about this is what we are planning to do with all of the employees that use a county vehicle. The County Manager explained the insurance rebate that is required annually and the type of information requested. Commissioner Evans mentioned the liability side to consider also.

Daniel Roten continued to review the Program; Motor-Vehicle Policy-Vehicle Use, Motor-Vehicle Policy—General Safety Rules, Motor-Vehicle Policy—Incident Reporting, Motor-Vehicle Incident/Accident Review, Hazard Communication.

Commissioner Leys and Daniel Roten talked about the intent of not carrying items while climbing up or down a ladder mentioned in the Program.

Chair Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about this will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Commissioner Leys, Daniel Roten and County Manager Don Adams talked about Department Heads have had an opportunity to comment on the document.

April Hamm, Transportation Director, explained she was before the Commissioners on November 3rd where the Section 5310 "ED" grant was approved. She reviewed that the previous grants were 90/10 grants and this grant was changed. She explained that the State

will not approve the 90/10 application. She reviewed the amount approved was \$21,415 and the new request is for an additional \$2,576. She explained the history of the ED program including the van doesn't leave Alleghany County and currently has 145,000 miles.

Commissioner Leys and April Hamm talked about the number of people who use this service.

Chair Smith and April Hamm talked about the grant changed from 90/10 to 50/50. She explained why the application was changed. They talked about she has contacted the State Transportation Director resulting in no luck.

County Manager Don Adams explained that tires and maintenance are no longer considered capital.

Commissioner Evans and April Hamm talked about the total amount of the grant is \$47,981 making the match \$23,991.

Commissioner Leys and April Hamm talked about this amount is necessary. April Hamm explained this will take the program to June 30, 2016, and what would happen if a major expense occurs.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the match monies is what it will costs the transportation operating fund. He further explained that the transportation admin budget is in the General Fund, and is reimbursed by the State at 85%. He explained the 40 (operating) Fund and how she has been able to make the 40 Fund self-sufficient until now. He talked about in the year we are in this fund will be in the negative, these conversations are about next year and the Board will see a budget amendment for the \$20,000 to make up the difference to keep the ED program going.

Commissioner Evans and the County Manager talked about this is the conversation that was had last year about this program. They talked about the loss was around \$18,000.

Commissioner Irwin and April Hamm talked about the reduction in gas prices will help. He asked about the increase in rates. April Hamm explained the recent rate increase in RGP portion.

Commissioner Leys and April Hamm talked about the use of the van if the van goes down, and there is capacity in the fleet if that happens.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve \$2,576 for the ED van/grant. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented the 2015 Joint Meeting Schedule with the Sparta Town Council.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve as presented. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented information about the recent propane bids received; AmeriGas \$1.385, Blue Ridge Energies \$1.139 and G&B Energy \$1.299. He said that he recommends to award the propane contract to Blue Ridge Energies for \$1.139 per gallon beginning December 16, 2014, to December 15, 2015.

Commissioner Leys and Clerk Karen Evans talked about last year's price was around \$1.38.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to award the contract to Blue Ridge Energies. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented information to the Board about the NCACC legislative goals and reviewed the information; goals that Alleghany County previously

submitted, 2015-16 proposed legislative goals to be voted on at the Goals Conference and the voting delegate designation form.

Chair Smith talked about all of the goals submitted by the County are included in these goals. He reviewed how the Legislative Goals Conference works. He stated that he has attended a couple of these and planning to attend this Conference.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to elect Tom Smith as the voting delegate. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Clerk Karen Evans mentioned registration is free in December to please let her know if anyone is planning to attend so she can register them.

Commissioner Leys thanked the Clerk for registering her.

County Manager Don Adams presented the history about the Veterans Park including the original name of the park, first application was denied, had to reapply in 2010 when it was awarded, original grant contact started in October 2010 with the original 2009 budget of \$344,959, which was put together by an architect who didn't take into consideration all of the environmental issues and taking that into consideration along with not going out to bid for a few years. He explained that at the time of the grant award in 2010 the Board of Commissioners didn't think they could come up with the required 50% match of \$172,480 so they told him if he could fundraise the money then we would build a park. He further explained how the naming of Veterans Memorial Park came about during the fundraising efforts. He named all of the donors for the Park. He explained that the Commissioners allocated \$57,479 for the Park to begin. He reviewed the progress including the number and types of permits required, went out to bid with the lowest bid being was \$470,470 with the total budget of \$344,959. He explained how the construction contract was negotiated to perform part of the work and County staff has constructed the concession stand and put in the walking track. He mentioned NCDOT, through their beautification department, is working on the landscaping along the bypass portion of the Park. He talked about the completion date with the grant is the end of March, so mid-April we will be finishing out everything. He explained that we are at a junction that we can take this basic park and turn it into a great park especially since it a Veterans Memorial Park. He stated that all of the funding so far is based on building the Park. He talked about the opportunity to fundraise for memorials. He recommended to start this process and to send out invitations to the Marines League, VFW and American Legion asking them to submit names to serve on a committee that will help design and fundraise for the memorial portion of the Park.

Chair Smith thanked everyone that has been involved with the Park.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to allow this action for the three groups to design and fundraise for the memorials. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion.

County Manager Don Adams explained the first action is for them to submit names, which he will bring back to this Board.

Commissioner Evans asked for the information that the County Manager was presenting to be emailed to him. The County Manager said he will send it.

Commissioner Leys talked about inviting them to fundraise and not putting the whole responsibility on them to fundraise all of the monies. The County Manager explained that he is asking them to do the fundraising. Commissioner Leys said there are other groups that would be willing to help. The County Manager explained the purpose of having a group, and they need to first come up with a design then branch out to other ideas including fundraising.

The Board voted on the motion on the floor. Vote 5:0.

Clerk Karen Evans explained that the wellness drawing is for all employees who have obtained 90 points in the Healthy Outcomes program through Blue Cross/Blue Shield. She said that there will be a drawing of 20 names for a \$10 Subway gift card each.

The Board drew the names; Brittany Bowman, Carroll Royall, Chris Martin, Craig Hart, Dana Johnson, Don Adams, Jackie Duncan, Janie Woodle, Jeff Miller, Jennifer Dowell, John Abernathy, John Blevins, Joy Hines, Elizabeth Roupe, Marsha Hudson, Rebecca Jones, Roxie Hobbs, Teresa Hurley, Theresa Dotson, Tiffany Boyer.

Chair Smith opened the floor for public comments. None were received. He closed that portion of the meeting.

Commissioner Davis wished everyone a safe holiday.

Commissioner Evans said he wishes everyone to have a Merry Christmas and enjoy time with their families. He talked about getting the youth involved and working on some alternatives. He said that it will be a challenge but thinks it would be good.

Commissioner Irwin wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. He said that he visited Veterans Memorial Park, look at the way it is being constructed, and the old way that John Woodruff got things accomplished. He thanked everyone for their work on it.

Commissioner Leys added Josh Greene and his crew too. She mentioned a letter from Ken Billings about how helpful Jeramiah Hampton has been. She explained that the DSS Board has offered Sandy Ashley a position as interim director. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a blessed holiday. She expressed appreciation to County employees and everyone in the county.

Chair Smith said for everyone to have a blessed Christmas.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to enter into closed session under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal at 1:13pm. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to adjourn closed session at 1:42pm and reconvened the regular meeting. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Smith stated no action was taken during closed session.

Being no further business, Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn at 1:43pm. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Tom Smith
Chair